

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION COME-00

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R 160504Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4844

INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL PERTH

AMCONSUL PORT MORESBY

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

UNCLAS CANBERRA 0362

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, AS

SUBJ: INTERIM DARWIN RECONSTRUCTION COMMISSION

1. GOA HAS NOW TAKEN FIRST STEPS TO SET UP ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TO OVERSEE RECONSTRUCTION OF DARWIN, WHICH WAS DEVASTATED BY TROPICAL STORM ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1974. NATURAL DISASTER ORGANIZATION HAS RELINQUISHED RESPONSIBILITY AS RELIEF OPERATIONS HAVE GIVEN WAY TO MASSIVE TASK OF RECONSTRUCTION.

2. INTERIM DARWIN RECONSTRUCTION COMMISSION (IDRC) HAS BEEN CREATED AS KEY AGENCY, ALTHOUGH OTHER GOA ENTITIES (CITIES COMMISSION OF DEPARTMENT OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION, BOTH IN CANBERRA) WILL ALSO HAVE AN INTEREST. SIR LESLIE THIESS, PROMINENT QUEENSLAND INDUSTRIALIST, HAS BEEN NAMED IDRC CHAIRMAN, BUT KEY POSITION OF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND OTHER STAFF POSITIONS HAVE NOT YET BEEN FILLED. EVENTUALLY, IDRC WILL DROP "INTERIM" FROM TITLE, AND A MORE PERMANENT DRC WILL BE LOCATED IN DARWIN. FOR PRESENT, IDRC CAN BE CONTACTED THROUGH DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN TERRITORY, P.O. BOX 357, CIVIC SQUARE, CANBERRA, A.C.T.

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EM EMBASSY COMMENT: EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES FOR U.S. GOODS

AND SERVICES RELATED TO REDESIGN AND RECONSTRUCTION OF DARWIN APPEAR TO BE LIMITED BY FACTS THAT AUSTRALIA ALREADY HAS SUBSTANTIAL TOWN PLANNING EXPERTISE AND THAT DOMESTIC CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SHOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE BULK OF REBUILDING EFFORT. ONE CITIES COMMISSION OFFICIAL (MANSFIELD, HEAD OF QUEENSLAND AND NORTHERN TERRITORY PROJECTS) TOLD EMBASSY OFFICER GOA WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SPECIAL CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES IN SOUTHERN U.S. DESIGNED TO WITHSTAND SEVERE TROPICAL STORMS. EMBASSY WILL REPORT EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES AS APPROPRIATE.
GREEN

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